# “Self-portrait” by Phung Cung

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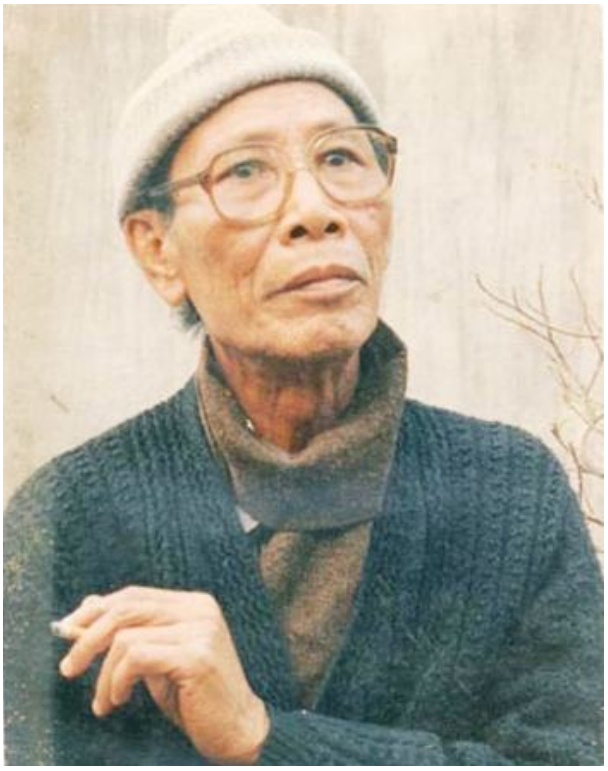
I loved Phung Cung’s poetry and memorized many of his poems written in Vietnamese. This poem, “Self-portrait”, has always been my favorite. It took me my whole courage to translate it into English. The translation was completed on September 23, 2022.

Once again, my co-author, Dr. Nancy K. Napier, gave her final touch on the translation today and told me the poem made her feel sad. Nancy’s feeling was also what I felt whenever reading this, so I believe this version is the best I can have. Therefore, I am pleased to introduce the poem in English to you all.

***Self-portrait***

*I dip my finger*
*Drawing myself on a water plate.*
*A thousand times, I repeat*
*Till my finger hurts and the plate dries.*
*Will there be a time*
*when that face becomes mine?*

—Phung Cung, Vietnamese poet (1928-1997)



*_Special note_: I am indebted to Dr. Nancy K. Napier for helping me finalize this translation.

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